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EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMOLOYMENT

ANNCR:

THE JUST RELEASED (FRIDAY) FIGURES ON U.S. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST BRINGS TO THE FOREFRONT WHAT HAS ALREADY BECOME A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ISSUE. VOA BUSINESS EDITOR FRANK FEINBERG HAS THESE THOUGHTS:

VOICE:

THE LABOR DEPARTMENT'S REPORT SHOWS AN INCREASE IN THE NATION'S TOTAL OF EMPLOYED PERSONS, AND A SIMULTANEOUS RISE IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE. THE NUMBER OF AMERICANS GAINFULLY EMPLOYED ROSE CLOSER TO EIGHTY-EIGHT MILLION -- A NEW RECORD. BUT THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ALSO ROSE, TO SEVEN POINT NINE PER CENT. ALTHOUGH THE INCREASE WAS STATISTICALLY SMALL -- ONE-TENTH OF ONE PER CENT -- IT IS TROUBLESOME. BECAUSE IT PERPETUATES WHAT IS HISTORICALLY FOR THE UNITED STATES A HIGH RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

HOW BEST TO GET MORE AMERICANS ON PAYROLLS WILL BE A KEY CAMPAIGN ISSUE BETWEEN PRESIDENT FORD AND DEMOCRATIC PARTY CANDIDATE JIMMY CARTER.

POLITICS ASIDE, HOWEVER, THE CHALLENGE OF MORE JOBS WILL CONFRONT WHATEVER ADMINISTRATION IS IN POWER IN 1977. THE PROBLEM IS ONE WHICH WILL OCCUPY INCREASING ATTENTION, NOT ONLY OF THE GOVERNMENT, BUT ALSO OF LABOR, BUSINESS, AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE.

IN DISCUSSING EMPLOYMENT, IT MUST BE OBSERVED THAT THERE IS A GREATER ELEMENT OF VOLUNTARY CHOICE AMONG THE

JOBLESS THAN PREVAILED IN THE DEPRESSION DAYS OF THE NINETEEN-THIRTIES. TODAY'S UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAMS ENABLE PEOPLE TO DERIVE INCOME, ALTHOUGH A REDUCED ONE, AND THEREBY ENCOURAGE SOME JOB SEEKERS TO HOLD OUT LONGER FOR MORE ACCEPTABLE POSITIONS.

ANOTHER JOB FACTOR IS THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN RECENT YEARS; MORE YOUNG PEOPLE AND MORE WOMEN NOW ARE ENTERING THE LABOR FORCE, WHICH IS APPROACHING NINETY-SIX MILLION PERSONS. THIS MEANS THAT MORE JOBS ARE NEEDED FOR THOSE SEEKING THEIR FIRST JOB. THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR TEENAGERS IS NINETEEN PER CENT.

MANY EXPERTS SAY THERE MUST BE NEW WAYS EVOLVED TO OPEN UP MORE JOB OPPORTUNITIES TO YOUTH AND WOMEN, PARTICULARLY THE UNSKILLED. IT IS PARADOXICAL THAT WHILE THIS GROUP HAS A HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, NUMEROUS JOBS REQUIRING SPECIFIC SKILLS CAN NOT BE READILY FILLED. THE ANSWER, IN PART, COULD BE REVISED EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMS ON A NATIONAL SCALE. ALSO HELPFUL COULD BE COMPUTER PROGRAMS TO BETTER PINPOINT JOBS GEOGRAPHICALLY, AND TO HELP RELOCATE QUALIFIED PERSONS.

THERE IS NO DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES THAT MORE JOBS ARE NECESSARY. BUT THEY DIFFER ON HOW TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL. MR. FORD AND HIS SUPPORTERS BELIEVE THAT AN IMPROVING ECONOMY WILL AUTOMATICALLY CREATE MORE JOBS AS BUSINESS EXPAND. MR. CARTER AND MANY DEMOCRATS IN CONGRESS PUT MORE EMPHASIS ON SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO CREATE MORE JOBS.

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